



PRESS RELEASE

NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS SERVICE

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Idaho Potato Stocks Down 10 Percent from Last Year

Potato stocks held by growers, dealers, and processors in Idaho on December 1 totaled 84.0 million cwt, 9.50 million cwt less than on hand December 1, 2004. Disappearance, at 33.0 million cwt is down from last year's 38.5 million cwt. Stocks in the 10 Southwest counties totaled 5.30 million cwt, down from last year's revised 5.70 million cwt. The Other counties' stocks, at 78.7 million cwt, were 9.1 million cwt less than the amount stored on December 1, 2004. Processors in Idaho and Malheur County, Oregon used 6.85 million cwt of 2005 crop raw potatoes during November, down 2 percent from last year. For the 2005 crop, processors have used a total of 22.6 million cwt to December 1, down 7 percent from last year. Idaho potatoes accounted for 18.0 million cwt of the total processed. The remaining 4.58 million cwt were produced in other states.

Size and grade data is now available for the 2005 crop. Idaho's Potato Objective Yield Survey showed that 28.6 percent of the potatoes were at least ten ounces, compared to 28.0 percent that reached that size in 2004. Of the Russet potatoes in the 2005 sample, 74.8 percent met the 2.0 inch or 4 oz. minimum size and grade requirements for U.S. No. 1 potatoes, down from 78.6 percent last year. Processing grade, with a 1.5 inch minimum, accounted for 24.0 percent of the 2005 crop.

Nationally, the 13 major potato States held 253 million cwt of potatoes in storage December 1, 2005, down 6 percent from last year and 5 percent below December 1, 2003, for comparable States. Potatoes in storage account for 68 percent of the 2005 fall storage States' production, 1 percentage point above last year. Disappearance of 120 million cwt of potatoes is down 8 percent from last year and 10 percent below 2 years ago for comparable States. Shrink and loss, at 14.0 million cwt so far this season, is down 9 percent from last year and 6 percent below the same date in 2003 for comparable States. Processors in the 9 major States have used 65.9 million cwt of potatoes this season, down 7 percent from a year ago and 9 percent below two years ago. Dehydrating usage accounts for 12.2 million cwt of the total processing, down 16 percent from last year and 14 percent below the same date in 2003.

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